

**STATEMENT OF U.S. REP. EDWARD J. MARKEY
ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
"CIGARS ARE NO SAFE ALTERNATIVE ACT OF 1998"**

August 5, 1998

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Cigars Are No Safe Alternative Act of 1998."

Mr. Speaker, available scientific evidence demonstrates that regular cigar smoking causes a variety of cancers including cancers of the lip, tongue, mouth, throat, esophagus, larynx, and lung. That same evidence demonstrates that heavy cigar smokers and those who inhale deeply are at increased risk of coronary heart disease and can develop chronic lung disease. Despite these serious and deadly health risks, cigar use is up dramatically in the United States over the last five years: small cigar consumption has increased by an estimated 13%, large cigars by 70%, and premium cigars by a whopping 250%. Teenagers are a fast-growing market for these deadly tobacco products. In fact, data from the Centers for Disease Control's 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate that among high school students, over 30 percent of the males and 10 percent of the females are current cigar smokers.

Mr. Speaker, **Cigars are not a safe alternative to cigarettes.** Compared to a cigarette, nicotine yields for cigars are 9 to 12 times greater; tar yields are 2 to 3 times greater; and large cigars emit 20 times more ammonia, and up to 10 times as much other cancer causing agents.

In order to drive home the message that smoking cigars is not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes, I am introducing the **Cigars Are No Safe Alternative Act of 1998**. The **CANSA Act** will prohibit the sale and distribution of cigars to any individual who is under the age of 18. It will direct impose restrictions on the sale and advertising of cigars directed at youth, and eliminate cigar advertising on electronic media. It will encourage cigar manufacturers to end the practice of paying for, or participating in cigar product placements in movies and on television where a substantial segment of the viewing audience is under the age of 18. And it will direct the FDA to require warning labels on cigars to warn cigar users about the health risks presented by cigars.

Mr. Speaker, the **CANSA Act** will also require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study on the health effects of occasional cigar smoking, nicotine dependence among cigar smokers, biological uptake of carcinogenic constituents of cigars, and environmental cigar smoke exposure. It will require the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to report to Congress on the sales, marketing, and advertising practices associated with cigars. And in addition, the Secretary, acting in cooperation with the FDA, the FTC, and the Department of Treasury, shall be required to monitor trends in youth access to, and use of, cigars and notify Congress of the results.

Mr. Speaker, if and when Congress does act to reduce teen smoking, we must send the unambiguous message to children and adolescents that cigars are no safe alternative to cigarettes. I urge all members to become cosponsors of the **Cigars Are No Safe Alternative (CANSA) Act of 1998**, and to support its passage in the House.